COCHIN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS

OFFICIAL REPORT OF THE BUDGET SESSION, 1118

Monday, *the* *26th July 1943* / *10th Karkadagam 1118*

The Council met in the Council Hall, Ernakulam, at 11 of the clock with the Hon'ble the President (A. F. W. DIXON Esq., C.I.E., I.C.S.) in the Chair.

The Resident for the Madras States was also present.

Messrs. Parambi Lonappan (Commissioner of Excise) and T. P. Poulose were absent.

WELCOME ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT

Mr. President : On behalf of the Chair, and I am sure that I may add on behalf of all Hon'ble Members, I extend a hearty welcome to our distinguished visitor Mr. H. J. Todd, the new Resident for the Madras States. We all wish him success in his High Office, and hope that he may be able to do much for the benefit of the State.

SWEARING IN OF NEW MEMBERS

Mr. T. Narayana Menon, Conservator of Forests, and Mr. Joseph Petta were sworn in.

OPENING SPEECH BY THE PRESIDENT

Mr. President :

Hon'ble Members,

Once again I extend to you all a most cordial welcome to the Budget Session of this Council. A year ago we met, as I then stated, at a critical moment in the world's history when German forces were driving towards the Volga and into the Caucasus threatening Russia's most vital supply lines, Axis forces were within short marching distance of the Nile Delta, and the power of Japan had still not been seriously challenged. I mentioned then that a British Minister had stated that at no time since the Battle of Britian had we stood in graver peril. Today we meet under altogether changed conditions. The Germans were forced back in Russia sustaining staggering losses, our enemies have not only been eliminated from Africa, but are now having their homelands invaded, while Japan has sustained such serious losses that it is clear that her complete defeat is only a matter of time. President Roosevelt has been able to state that the invasion of Sicily marks the beginning of the end.

While we rejoice in these resounding successes and face the future with the greatest confidence, determined to do all we can to hasten victory, we realise that here in Cochin State, we have still many difficulties to face. We have passed through a difficult year marked by a continuous struggle to obtain a sufficiency of food to feed the people, and by a rapid rise in the cost of commodities, which, while it has benefitted large sections of the population, has caused hardship to many others.

ECONOMIC SITUATION

This problem of inflation is indeed one of the most serious and difficult with which the country is faced today. While considerable expansion of currency and increase in prices are inevitable in present circumstances, in view of India's gigantic war effort, it is necessary in the interests of the country to keep these increases within bounds to avoid disastrous economic consequences. The Government of India have taken and are taking action with that end in view, and it is the clear duty of States to co-operate in the interests of India as a whole. Cochin State can claim a good record in this respect. In a country with so low a standard of living as India, food is by far the most important commodity, and unless food prices are kept under control, other anti-inflationary measures will be largely ineffective. This State by taking over complete control of staple food grains from the field or place of entry to the consumer has introduced a thoroughly effective form of price control and has largely eliminated hoarding and profiteering.

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